

3 per
ELEGIAC SONNETS.

By CHARLOTTE SMITH

THE THIRD EDITION.

WITH

TWENTY ADDITIONAL SONNETS.

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. DODSLEY, H. GARDNER, and J. BEW,

[PRICE THREE SHILLINGS.]

3
ELEGIAC SONNETS.

BY CHARLOTTE SMITH

THE THIRD EDITION.

46.

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4

410

SONNETS

LONDON.

PRINTED BY J. JOHNSON, ST. PAULS CHURCH-YARD.

1793.



E R R A T A.

Sonnet 17, page 28, line 3, for *thy* name, read *hw* name.

Sonnet 29, page 30, line 11, for with *abearful* smile, read with *tearful* smile.

In the Note on Sonnet 13, page 41, for Pommi ove'l fol, *ovide* i fiori e l'erba, read
accide i fiori e l'erba.

E R A T A

Some 11, page 25, line 2, for the name, read the name.
Some 11, page 30, line 11, for with churchy, read with church.
In the Note on Some 11, page 41, for Point, read Point, read
some 11, page 41, line 11, for Point, read Point.

WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esq.

S I R,

WHILE I ask your protection for these
Essays, I cannot deny having myself
some esteem for them. Yet, permit me to say,
that did I not trust to your candour and sen-
sibility, and hope they will plead for the errors

b

your

ii D E D I C A T I O N.

your judgment must discover, I should never have availed myself of the liberty I have obtained—that of dedicating these simple effusions to the greatest modern Master of that charming talent, in which I can never be more than a distant copyist.

I am,

S I R,

Your most obedient

and obliged servant,

CHARLOTTE SMITH.

P R E F A C E
TO THE FIRST EDITIONS.

THE little Poems which are here called Sonnets, have I believe no very just claim to that title: but they consist of fourteen lines, and appear to me no improper vehicle for a single sentiment. I am told, and I read it as the opinion of very good judges, that the legitimate Sonnet is ill calculated for our language. The specimen Mr. Hayley has given, though they form a strong exception, prove no more, than that the difficulties of the attempt vanish before uncommon powers.

Some

Some very melancholy moments have been beguiled, by expressing in verse the sensations those moments brought. Some of my friends, with partial indiscretion, have multiplied the copies they procured of several of these attempts, till they found their way into the prints of the day in a mutilated state; which concurring with other circumstances, determined me to put them into their present form. I can hope for readers only among the few, who to sensibility of heart, join simplicity of taste.

P R E F A C E

TO THE THIRD EDITION.

*T*HE reception given by the Public, as well as my particular Friends, to the two first Editions of these small Poems, has induced me to add to the present such other Sonnets as I have written since, or have recovered from my acquaintance, to whom I had given them without thinking well enough of them at the time to preserve any copies myself. A few of those last written, I have attempted on the Italian model; with what success I know not, but I am persuaded that to the generality of readers those which are less regular will be more pleasing.

As a few notes were necessary, I have added them at the end. I have there quoted such lines as I have borrowed; and even where I am conscious the ideas were not my own, I have restored them to their original possessors.

WOOLBEDING,
March 22d, 1786.

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ELEGIAC

ELEGIAC SONNETS.

S O N N E T I.

THE partial Muse, has from my earliest hours
Smil'd on the rugged path I'm doom'd to tread,
And still with sportive hand has snatch'd wild flowers,
To weave fantastic garlands for my head:
But far, far happier is the lot of those
Who never learn'd her dear delusive art,
Which while it decks the head with many a rose,
Reserves the thorn, to fester in the heart.

B

For

For still she bids soft Pity's melting eye

Stream o'er the ills she knows not to remove,
Points every pang, and deepens every sigh

Of mourning friendship, or unhappy love.

Ah! then, how dear the Muse's favors cost,

(a) If those paint sorrow best—who feel it most!

SONNET

SONNET II.

WRITTEN AT THE CLOSE OF SPRING.

THE garland's fade that Spring so lately wove,
 Each simple flower, which she had nurs'd in dew,
 (b) Anemonies that spangled every grove,
 The primrose wan, and hare-bell, mildly blue.
 No more shall violets linger in the dell,
 Or purple orchis variegate the plain,
 Till spring again shall call forth every bell,
 And dress with humid hands, her wreaths again.
 Ah! poor humanity! so frail, so fair,
 Are the fond visions of thy early day,
 Till tyrant passion, and corrosive care,
 Bid all thy fairy colours fade away!
 Another May new buds and flowers shall bring;
 Ah! why has happiness—no second spring?

SONNET

S O N N E T O III.

TO A NIGHTINGALE.

(c) **P** OOR melancholy bird—that all night long
 Tell'ft to the Moon, thy tale of tender woe;
 From what sad caufe can fuch sweet sorrow flow,
 And whence this mournful melody of fong?
 Thy poet's mufing fancy would tranflate
 What mean the founds that swell thy little breast,
 When ftill at dewy eve thou leav'ft thy neft,
 Thus to the liftening night to fing thy fate.
 Pale Sorrow's victims wert thou once among,
 Tho' now releas'd in woodlands wild to rove,
 Say—haft thou felt from friends fome cruel wrong,
 Or diedft thou—martyr of difaftrous love?
 Ah! fongftrefs fad!—that fuch my lot might be,
 To figh and fing at liberty—like thee!

S O N N E T

SONNET IV.

TO THE MOON.

QUEEN of the silver bow!—by thy pale beam,
 Alone and pensive, I delight to stray,
 And watch thy shadow trembling in the stream,
 Or mark the floating clouds that cross thy way,
 And while I gaze, thy mild and placid light
 Sheds a soft calm upon my troubled breast;
 And oft I think,—fair planet of the night,
 That in thy orb, the wretched may have rest:
 The sufferers of the earth perhaps may go,
 Releas'd by death—to thy benignant sphere,
 And the sad children of despair and woe
 Forget in thee, their cup of sorrow here.
 Oh! that I soon may reach thy world serene,
 Poor wearied pilgrim—in this toiling scene!

SONNET

C

SONNET

SONNET V.

TO THE SOUTH DOWNS.

AH, hills belov'd!—where once, an happy child,
 Your beechen shades, (d) 'your turf, your flowers among,
 I wove your blue-bells into garland's wild,
 And woke your echoes with my artless song.
 Ah, hills belov'd!—your turf, your flow'rs remain;
 But can they peace to this sad breast restore,
 For one poor moment soothe the sense of pain,
 And teach a breaking heart to throb no more?
 And you, (e) Aruna!—in the vale below,
 As to the sea your limpid waves you bear,
 Can you one kind Lethæan cup bestow,
 To drink a long oblivion to my care?
 Ah, no!—when all, e'en hope's last ray is gone,
 There's no oblivion—but in death alone!

SONNET

S O N N E T VI.

TO HOPE.

O H, Hope! thou soother sweet of human woes!
 How shall I lure thee to my haunts forlorn?
 For me wilt thou renew the wither'd rose,
 And clear my painful path of pointed thorn?
 Ah come, sweet nymph! in smiles and softness drest,
 Like the young hours that lead the tender year;
 Enchantress come! and charm my cares to rest:—
 Alas! the flatterer flies, and will not hear!
 A prey to fear, anxiety, and pain,
 Must I a sad existence still deplore;
 Lo!—the flowers fade, but all the thorns remain,
 (f) 'For me the vernal garland blooms no more.'
 Come then (g) 'pale Misery's love!' be thou my cure,
 And I will bless thee, who tho' slow art sure.

S O N N E T

S O N N E T VII.

ON THE DEPARTURE OF THE NIGHTINGALE.

SWEET poet of the woods—a long adieu!
 Farewel, soft minstrel of the early year!
 Ah! 'twill be long ere thou shalt sing anew,
 And pour thy music on the (b) ' nights dull ear;
 Whether on (i) spring thy wandering flights await,
 Or whether silent in our groves you dwell,
 The pensive muse (k) shall own thee for her mate,
 And still protect the song, she loves so well.
 With cautious step, the love-lorn youth shall glide
 Thro' the lone brake that shades thy mossy nest;
 And shepherd girls, from eyes profane shall hide
 The gentle bird, who sings of pity best.
 For still thy voice shall soft affections move,
 And still be dear to sorrow, and to love!

S O N N E T VIII.

TO SPRING.

A GAIN the wood, and long with-drawing vale,
 In many a tint of tender green are drest,
 Where the young leaves unfolding scarce conceal
 Beneath their early shade the half-form'd nest
 Of finch or wood-lark; and the primrose pale,
 And lavish cowslip, wildly scatter'd round,
 Give their sweet spirits to the sighing gale.
 Ah! season of delight!—could aught be found
 To soothe awhile the tortur'd bosom's pain,
 Of sorrow's rankling shaft to cure the wound,
 And bring life's first delusions once again,
 'Twere surely met in thee!—Thy prospect fair,
 Thy sounds of harmony, thy balmy air,
 (1) Have power to cure all sadness—but despair.

D

SONNET

S O N N E T IX.

BLEST is yon shepherd, on the turf reclin'd,
 Who on the varied clouds which float above
 Lies idly gazing—while his vacant mind
 Pours out some tale antique of rural love!
 Ah! *he* has never felt the pangs that move
 Th' indignant spirit, when with selfish pride,
 Friends, on whose faith the trusting heart rely'd,
 Unkindly shun th' imploring eye of woe
 The ills they ought to soothe with taunts deride,
 And laugh at (*m*) tears themselves have forc'd to flow!
 Nor *his* rude bosom those fine feelings melt,
 Children of Sentiment and Knowledge born,
 Thro' whom each shaft with cruel force is felt,
 Empoison'd by deceit—or barb'd with scorn.

S O N N E T

S O N N E T X.

T O M R S. G.

AH! why will mem'ry with officious care
 The long lost visions of my day's renew;
 Why paint the vernal landscape green and fair,
 When life's gay dawn was opening to my view.
 Ah! wherefore bring those moments of delight,
 When with my Anna, on the southern shore,
 I thought the future, as the present bright :
 Ye dear delusions!—ye return no more!
 Alas! how diff'rent does the truth appear,
 From the warm picture youth's rash hand pourtrays,
 How fades the scene, as we approach it near,
 And pain and sorrow strike—how many ways!
 Yet of that tender heart, ah! still retain
 A share for me—and I will not complain!—

S O N N E T

S O N N E T XI.

T O S L E E P.

COME balmy Sleep! tir'd nature's soft resort,
 On these sad temples all thy poppies shed;
 And bid gay dreams, from Morpheus' airy court,
 Float in light vision round my aching head!—
 Secure of all thy blessings, partial Power!
 On his hard bed the peasant throws him down;
 And the (n) poor sea boy, in the rudest hour,
 Enjoys thee more than he who wears a crown.
 Clasp'd in her faithful shepherd's guardian arms,
 Well may the village girl sweet slumbers prove;
 And they, O gentle Sleep!—still taste thy charms,
 Who wake to labour, liberty, and love.
 But still thy opiate aid dost thou deny
 To calm the anxious breast; to close the streaming eye.

S O N N E T

S O N N E T XII.

WRITTEN ON THE SEA SHORE.—OCTOBER, 1784.

ON some rude fragment of the rocky shore,
 Where on the fractur'd cliff, the billows break,
 Musing, my solitary seat I take;
 And listen to the deep and solemn roar.

O'er the dark waves the winds tempestuous howl;
 The screaming sea-bird quits the troubled sea:
 But the wild gloomy scene has charms for me,
 (o) And suits the mournful temper of my soul.

Already shipwreck'd by the storms of fate,
 Like the poor mariner methinks I stand,
 Cast on a rock; who sees the distant land
 From whence no succour comes; or comes too late.
 Faint and more faint are heard his feeble cries,
 'Till in the rising tide, th' exhausted sufferer dies.

E

S O N N E T

S O N N E T XIII.

FROM PETRARCH.

(p) O H! place me where the burning noon
 Forbids the wither'd flow'r to blow;
 Or place me in the frigid zone,
 On mountains of eternal snow.
 Let me pursue the steps of fame;
 Or poverty's more tranquil road:
 Let youth's warm tide my veins inflame,
 Or sixty winters chill my blood.
 Tho' my fond soul to Heav'n were flown,
 Or tho' on Earth 'tis doom'd to pine,
 Prisoner or free—obscure or known,
 My heart, oh Laura! still is thine.
 Whate'er my destiny may be,
 That faithful heart, still burns for thee!

SONNET

S O N N E T XIV.

FROM PETRARCH.

(g) **L**OOSE to the wind her golden tresses stream'd,
 Forming bright waves, with amorous Zephyr's sighs;
 And tho' averted now, her charming eyes
 Then with warm love, and melting pity beam'd.
 Was I deceiv'd?—Ah! surely, nymph divine!
 That fine suffusion on thy cheek, was love;
 What wonder then those lovely tints should move,
 Should fire this heart, this tender heart of mine!
 Thy soft melodious voice, thy air, thy shape,
 Were of a goddess—not a mortal maid;
 Yet tho' thy charms, thy heavenly charms should fade,
 My heart, my tender heart could not escape;
 Nor cure for me in time or change be found:
 The shaft extracted, does not cure the wound!

S O N N E T

S O N N E T XV.

FROM PETRARCH.

(r) **W**HERE the green leaves exclude the summer beam,
 And softly bend as balmy breezes blow,
 And where, with liquid lapse, the lucid stream
 Across the fretted rock is heard to flow,
 Pensive I lay: when she whom earth conceals,
 As if still living, to my eyes appears,
 And pitying Heaven her angel form reveals,
 To say —unhappy Petrarch, dry your tears;
 Ah! why, sad lover! thus before your time,
 In grief and sadness should your life decay,
 And like a blighted flower, your manly prime
 In vain and hopeless sorrow, fade away?
 Ah! wherefore should you mourn, that her you love,
 Snatch'd from a world of woe—survives in bliss above!

SONNET

SONNET

S O N N E T XVI.

FROM PETRARCH.

O YE vales and woods! fair scenes of happier hours!
 Ye feather'd people, tenants of the grove!
 And you, bright stream! befring'd with shrubs and flowers,
 Behold my grief, ye witnesses of love!

 For ye beheld my infant passion rise,
 And saw thro' years unchang'd my faithful flame;
 Now cold, in dust, the beauteous object lies,
 And you, ye conscious scenes, are still the same!

 While busy memory still delights to dwell
 On all the charms these bitter tears deplore,
 And with a trembling hand describes too well
 The angel form I shall behold no more!
 To heaven she's fled! and nought to me remains
 But the pale ashes, which her urn contains.

F

S O N N E T

S O N N E T XVII.

FROM THE THIRTEENTH CANTATA OF METASTASIO.

(1) **O**N thy grey bark, in witness of my flame,
 I carve Miranda's cypher—Beauteous tree!
 Graced with the lovely letters of thy name,
 Henceforth be sacred, to my love and me.
 Tho' the tall elm, the oak, and sombre pine,
 With broader arms, may noon's fierce ardors break,
 To shelter me, and her I love, be thine;
 And thine to see her smile, and hear her speak.
 No bird, ill omen'd, round thy graceful head
 Shall clamour harsh, or wave his heavy wing,
 But fern and flowers arise beneath thy shade,
 Where the wild bees, their lullabys shall sing.
 And in thy boughs the murmuring Ring-dove rest;
 And there the Nightingale shall build her nest.

S O N N E T

S O N N E T XVIII.

TO THE EARL OF EGREMONT.

WYNDHAM! 'tis not thy blood, tho' pure it runs
Thro' a long line of glorious ancestry!

Percys and Seymours! Britain's boasted sons!

Who trust the honors of their race to thee.

'Tis not thy splendid domes, where science loves

To touch the canvas, and the bust to raise;

Thy rich domains, fair fields, and spreading groves;

'Tis not all these the Muse delights to praise.

In birth and wealth and honors, great thou art,

But nobler, in thy independant mind:

And in that liberal hand and feeling heart

Given thee by Heaven,—a blessing to mankind!

Unworthy oft may titled fortune be;

A soul like thine—is true Nobility!

S O N N E T

S O N N E T XIX.

TO MR. HAYLEY.

ON RECEIVING SOME ELEGANT LINES FROM HIM.

FOR me the Muse a simple band design'd
 Of 'idle' flowers, that bloom the woods among,
 Which with the cypress and the willow join'd,
 A garland form'd, as artless as my song.
 And little dar'd I hope its transient hours
 So long would last; compos'd of buds so brief;
 'Till Hayley's hand, among the vagrant flowers,
 Threw from his verdant crown, a deathless leaf.
 For high in Fame's bright fane has judgment plac'd
 The laurel wreath Serena's Poet won,
 Which, wov'n with myrtles by the hands of Taste,
 The Muse decreed, for this her favourite son.
 And those immortal leaves his temples shade,
 Whose fair eternal verdure—shall not fade!

SONNET

S O N N E T XX.

TO THE COUNTESS OF A—.

WRITTEN ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF HER MARRIAGE.

ON this blest day may no dark cloud or shower,
 With envious shade, the Sun's bright influence hide;
 But all his rays illumine the favour'd hour,
 That saw thee, Mary!—Henry's lovely bride!

With years revolving may it still arise,
 Blest with each good approving Heaven can lend;
 And still with ray serene, shall those blue eyes
 Enchant the husband, and attach the friend.

For you, fair Friendship's amaranth shall blow,
 And Love's own thornless roses, bind your brow;
 And when—long hence—to happier worlds you go,
 Your beauteous race shall be, what you are now!
 And future Nevills, thro' long ages shine,
 With hearts as good; and forms as fair as thine.

G

SONNET

S O N N E T XXI.

SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN BY WERTER.

GO, cruel tyrant of the human breast!
 To other hearts, thy burning arrows bear;
 Go, where fond hope, and fair illusion rest;
 Ah! why should love inhabit with despair!
 Like the (u) poor maniac I linger here,
 Still haunt the scene, where all my treasure lies;
 Still seek for flowers, where only thorns appear,
 And drink delicious poison from her eyes.
 Towards the deep gulph that opens on my sight
 I hurry forward, passion's helpless slave!
 And scorning reason's mild and sober light,
 Pursue the path, that leads me to the grave.
 So round the flame the giddy insect flies,
 And courts the fatal fire, by which it dies.

S O N N E T

SONNET XXII.

BY THE SAME.

TO SOLITUDE.

(v) **O**H, Solitude! to thy sequester'd vale
 I come to hide my sorrow and my tears,
 And to thy echoes tell the mournful tale
 Which scarce I trust to pitying friendship's ears.
 Amidst thy wild woods and untrodden glades,
 No sounds but those of melancholy move;
 And the low winds that die among thy shades,
 Seem like soft pity's sighs, for hopeless love!
 And sure some story of despair and pain,
 In yon deep copse, thy murm'ring Doves relate;
 And hark! methinks in that long plaintive strain,
 Thine own sweet songstress weeps my wayward fate.
 Ah, Nymph! that fate assist me to endure,
 And bear awhile—what death alone can cure!

SONNET

S O N N E T XXIII.

BY THE SAME.

TO THE NORTH STAR.

(w) **T**OWARDS thy bright beams I turn my swimming
eyes,

Fair, fav'rite planet! which in happier days
Saw my young hopes, ah! faithless hopes!—arise;

And on my passion shed propitious rays!

Now nightly wandering 'mid the tempests drear

That howl the woods, and rocky steeps among,

I love to see thy sudden light appear

Thro' the swift clouds—driv'n by the wind along:

Or in the turbid water, rude and dark,

O'er whose wild stream the gust of Winter raves,

Thy trembling light with pleasure still I mark,

Gleam in faint radiance on the foaming waves.

So o'er my soul short rays of reason fly,

Then fade:—and leave me, to despair and die!

S O N N E T

S O N N E T XXIV.

BY THE SAME.

(x) **M**AKE there my tomb; beneath the lime-trees shade,
 Where grass and flowers in wild luxuriance wave;
 Let no memorial mark where I am laid,
 Or point to common eyes the lover's grave!
 But oft at twilight morn, or closing day,
 The faithful friend with fault'ring step shall glide,
 Tributes of fond regret by stealth to pay,
 And sigh o'er the unhappy suicide.
 And sometimes, when the Sun with parting rays
 Gilds the long grass that hides my silent bed,
 The tear shall tremble in my CHARLOTTE's eyes;
 Dear, precious drops!—they shall embalm the dead.
 Yes!—CHARLOTTE o'er the mournful spot shall weep,
 Where her poor WERTER—and his sorrows sleep.

H

S O N N E T

S O N N E T XXV.

BY THE SAME.

JUST BEFORE HIS DEATH.

(y) **W**H Y should I wish to hold in this low sphere
 ‘A frail and feverish being?’ wherefore try
 Poorly from day to day to linger here,
 Against the powerful hand of destiny?
 By those who know the force of hopeless care,
 On the worn heart—I sure shall be forgiven,
 If to elude dark guilt, and dire despair,
 I go uncall’d—to mercy and to heaven!
 Oh thou! to save whose peace I now depart,
 Will thy soft mind, thy poor lost friend deplore,
 When worms shall feed on this devoted heart,
 Where even thy image shall be found no more!
 Yet may thy pity mingle not with pain,
 For then thy hapless lover—dies in vain.

S O N N E T

S O N N E T XXVI.

TO THE RIVER ARUN.

ON thy wild banks, by frequent torrents worn,
 No glittering fanes, or marble domes appear,
 Yet shall the mournful Muse thy course adorn,
 And still to her thy rustic waves be dear.
 For with the infant Otway, (*z*) lingering here,
 Of early woes she bade her votary dream,
 While thy low murmurs soothed his pensive ear,
 And still the poet—consecrates the stream.
 Beneath the oak and birch, that fringe thy side,
 The first-born violets of the year shall spring,
 And in thy hazles, bending o'er the tide,
 The earliest Nightingale delight to sing:
 While kindred spirits, pitying, shall relate
 Thy Otway's sorrows, and lament his fate!

SONNET

S O N N E T XXVII.

SIGHING I see yon little troop at play;
 By sorrow yet untouch'd; unhurt by care;
 While free and sportive they enjoy to-day,
 (aa) 'Content and careless of to-morrow's fare!
 O happy age! when Hope's unclouded ray
 Lights their green path, and prompts their simple mirth,
 E'er yet they feel the thorns that lurking lay
 To wound the wretched pilgrims of the earth;
 Making them rue the hour that gave them birth,
 And threw them on a world so full of pain,
 Where prosperous folly treads on patient worth,
 And to deaf pride, misfortune pleads in vain.
 Ah!—for their future fate how many fears
 Oppress my heart—and fill mine eyes with tears!

S O N N E T

S O N N E T XXVIII.

TO FRIENDSHIP.

O H thou! whose name too often is profan'd!
 Whose charms, celestial! few have hearts to feel!
 Unknown to folly —and by pride disdain'd;
 —To thy soft solace may my sorrows steal!
 Like the fair Moon, thy mild and genuine ray,
 Thro' life's long evening shall unclouded last;
 While the frail summer-friendship fleets away,
 As fades the rainbow from the northern blast.
 'Tis thine, oh Nymph! with *(bb)* 'balmy hands to bind'
 The wounds inflicted in misfortunes storm,
 And blunt severe afflictions sharpest dart.
 —'Tis thy pure spirit warms my Anna's mind!
 Beams thro' the pensive softness of her form,
 And holds its altar —on her spotless heart.

S O N N E T XXIX.

TO MISS C—.

ON BEING DESIRED TO ATTEMPT WRITING A COMEDY.

WOULD'ST thou then have *me* tempt the comic scene
 Of laughing Thalia?—Us'd so long to tread
 The gloomy paths of sorrow's cypress shade;
 And the lorn lay, with sighs and tears to stain?
 Alas! how much unfit her sprightly vein!
 Arduous to try!—and seek the funny mead,
 And bowers of roses, where she loves to lead
 The sportive subjects of her golden reign!—
 Enough for me, if still, to soothe my days,
 Her fair and pensive sister condescend,
 With chearful smile to bless my simple lays;
 Enough, if her soft notes she sometimes lend,
 To gain for me, of feeling hearts the praise,
 And chiefly thine, my ever partial friend!

S O N N E T

S O N N E T XXX.

TO THE RIVER ARUN.

BE the proud Thames, of trade the busy mart!
 Arun! to thee will other praise belong;
 Dear to the lover's, and the mourner's heart,
 And ever sacred to the sons of song!

Thy shadowy rocks, unhappy love shall seek,
 Where mantling loose, the (cc) green clematis flaunts,
 And sorrow's drooping form and faded cheek,
 Choose on thy willow'd shore her lonely haunts.

(dd) Banks! which inspir'd thy Otway's plaintive strain!
 Wilds!—whose lorn echo's learn'd the deeper tone
 Of Collins' powerful shell! yet once again
 Another poet—Hayley is thine own!
 Thy classic stream anew shall hear a lay,
 Bright as its waves, and various as its way!

SONNET

S O N N E T XXXI.

WRITTEN ON FARM WOOD, SOUTH DOWNS, IN MAY, 1784.

SPRING'S dewy hand on this fair summit weaves
 The downy grass, with tufts of Alpine (ee) flowers,
 And shades the beechen slopes with tender leaves,
 And leads the shepherd to his upland bowers,
 Strewn with wild thyme: while slow-descending showers,
 Feed the green ear, and nurse the future sheaves.
 —Ah, blest the hind!—whom no sad thought bereaves
 Of the gay season's pleasures!—All his hours
 To wholesome labour given, or thoughtless mirth;
 No pangs of sorrow past, or coming dread,
 Bend his unconscious spirit down to earth,
 Or chase calm slumbers from his careless head.
 Ah! what to me can those dear days restore,
 When scenes could charm, that now I taste no more!

SONNET

S O N N E T XXXII.

TO MELANCHOLY.

WRITTEN ON THE BANKS OF THE ARUN. OCTOBER, 1780

WHEN latest Autumn spreads her evening veil,
 And the grey mists from these dim waves arise,
 I love to listen to the hollow sighs,
 Thro' the half leafless wood that breathes the gale.
 For at such hours the shadowy phantom, pale,
 Oft seems to fleet before the poet's eyes;
 Strange sounds are heard, and mournful melodies,
 As of night wanderers, who their woes bewail.
 Here, by his native stream, at such an hour,
 Pity's own Otway, I methinks could meet,
 And hear his deep sighs swell the sadden'd wind.
 Oh melancholy!—such thy magic power,
 That to the soul these dreams are often sweet,
 And soothe the pensive visionary mind!

K

S O N N E T

S O N N E T XXXIII.

TO THE NAIAD OF THE ARUN.

GO, rural Naiad! wind thy stream along
 Thro' woods and wilds: then seek the ocean caves
 Where sea nymphs meet, their coral rocks among,
 To boast the various honors of their waves!
 'Tis but a little, o'er thy shallow tide,
 That toiling trade her burthen'd vessel leads;
 But laurels grow luxuriant on thy fide,
 And Letters live, along thy classic meads.
 Lo! where mid British bards (*ff*) thy natives shine!
 And now another poet helps to raise
 Thy glory high—the poet of the MINE!
 Whose brilliant talents are his smallest praise:
 And who, to all that genius can impart,
 Adds the cool head, and the unblemish'd heart.

S O N N E T

S O N N E T XXXIV.

T O A F R I E N D.

CHARM'D by thy suffrage shall I yet aspire
 (All inauspicious as my fate appears,
 By troubles darken'd, that encrease with years,)

To guide the crayon, or to touch the lyre?
 Ah me!—the sister Muses still require
 A spirit free from all intrusive fears,
 Nor will they deign to wipe away the tears
 Of vain regret, that dim their sacred fire.

But when thy sanction crowns my simple lays,
 A ray of pleasure lights my languid mind,
 For well I know the value of thy praise;
 And to how few, the flattering meed confin'd,
 That thou,—their highly favour'd brows to bind,
 Wilt weave green myrtle, and unfading bays!

S O N N E T

S O N N E T XXXV.

TO FORTITUDE.

NYMPH of the rock! whose dauntless spirit braves
 The beating storm, and bitter winds that howl
 Round thy cold breast; and hear'st the bursting waves,
 And the deep thunder with unshaken soul;
 Oh come!—and shew how vain the cares that press
 On my weak bosom—and how little worth
 Is the false fleeting meteor happiness,
 That still misleads the wanderers of the earth!
 Strengthen'd by thee, this heart shall cease to melt
 O'er ills that poor humanity must bear;
 Nor friends estrang'd, or ties dissolv'd be felt
 To leave regret, and fruitless anguish there:
 And when at length it heaves its latest sigh,
 Thou and mild hope, shall teach me how to die!

SONNET

S O N N E T XXXVI.

SHOULD the lone Wanderer, fainting on his way,
 Rest for a moment of the sultry hours,
 And tho' his path thro' thorns and roughness lay,
 Pluck the wild rose, or woodbines gadding flowers:
 Weaving gay wreaths, beneath some sheltering tree,
 The sense of sorrow, he awhile may lose;
 So have I sought thy flowers, fair Poesy!
 So charm'd my way, with Friendship and the Muse,
 But darker now grows life's unhappy day,
 Dark, with new clouds of evil, yet to come,
 Her pencil sickening Fancy throws away,
 And weary Hope reclines upon the tomb;
 And points my wishes to that tranquil shore,
 Where the pale spectre Care, pursues no more.

QUOTATIONS, NOTES and EXPLANATIONS.

SONNET I.

- (a) Ah! then, how dear the Muse's favours cost,
If those paint sorrow best—who feel it most!

The well sung woes shall soothe my pensive ghost;
He best can paint them, who shall feel them most.

Pope's Eloisa to Abelard, 366th line.

SONNET II.

- (b) Anemonies, that spangled every grove.

Anemony Nemerofo. The wood Anemony.

SONNET III.

- (c) The idea from the 43d Sonnet of Petrarch. Secondo parte.
Quei rosignuol, che si soave piagne.

SONNET V.

- (d) Your turf, your flowers among.
Whose turf, whose shades, whose flowers among.

Gray.

- (e) Aruna!
The river Arun.

SONNET VI.

- (f) 'For me the vernal garland blooms no more.'

Pope's Imitation of the first Ode of the fourth Book of Horace.

- (g) 'Mifery's love.'

Shakespeare's King John.

SONNET

SONNET VII.

(b) 'On the night's dull ear.'

Shakespeare.

(i) Whether on Spring—Alludes to the supposed migration of the Nightingale.

(k) The pensive Muse shall own thee for her mate.

Whether the Muse or Love call thee his mate,
Both them I serve, and of their train am I.

Milton's First Sonnet.

SONNET VIII.

(l) Have power to cure all sadness—but despair.

To the heart inspires
Vernal delight and joy, able to drive
All sadness but despair.

Paradise Lost, Fourth Book.

SONNET IX.

(m) And laugh at tears themselves have forc'd to flow.

And hard unkindness' alter'd eye,
That mocks the tear it forc'd to flow.

Gray.

SONNET XI.

(n) And the poor Sea boy, in the rudest hour,
Enjoys thee more than he who wears a crown.
Wilt thou upon the high and giddy mast
Seal up the ship boy's eyes, and rock his brains
In cradle of the rude impetuous surge? &c.

Shakespeare's Henry IV.

SONNET

S O N N E T XII.

(v) And fuits the mournful temper of my foul.

This line is not my own, but I know not where to look for it.

S O N N E T XIII.

(p) Pommi ove'l Sol, ouide i fiori e l'erba.

Petrarch, Sonnetto 112. Parte primo.

S O N N E T XIV.

(q) Erano i capei d'oro all'aura sparsi.

Sonnetto 69. Parte primo.

S O N N E T XV.

(r) Se lamentar augelli o verdi fronde.

Sonnetto 21. Parte seconda.

S O N N E T XVI.

(f) Valle che de lamenti miei se piena.

Sonnetto 33. Parte seconda.

S O N N E T XVII.

(i) Scrivo in te l'amato nome

Di colei, per cui, mi moro.

I do not mean this as a translation; the original is much longer, and full of images, which could not be introduced in a Sonnet.—And some of them, tho' very beautiful in the Italian, would I believe not appear to advantage in an English dress.

S O N N E T XXI.

(u) 'Poor Maniac.'

See the Story of the Lunatic.

'Is this the destiny of Man? Is he only happy before he possesses his reason, or after he has lost it?—Full of hope you go to gather flowers in Winter, and are grieved not to find any—and do not know why they cannot be found.'

Sorrows of Werter. Volume Second.

S O N N E T XXII.

(v) 'I climb steep rocks, I break my way through copses, among thorns and briars which tear me to pieces, and I feel a little relief.'

Sorrows of Werter. Volume First.

S O N N E T XXIII.

(w) 'The greater Bear, favourite of all the constellations; for when I left you of an evening it us'd to shine opposite your window.'

Sorrows of Werter. Volume Second.

S O N N E T XXIV.

(x) 'At the corner of the church yard which looks towards the fields, there are two lime trees—it is there I wish to rest.'

Sorrows of Werter. Volume Second.

S O N N E T XXV.

(y) 'May my death remove every obstacle to your happiness.—Be at peace, I entreat you be at peace.'

Sorrows of Werter. Volume Second.

S O N N E T

SONNET XXVI.

(z) For with the infant Otway, lingering here.

Otway was born at Trotten, a village in Suffex. Of Woolbeding, another village on the banks of the Arun, (which runs thro' them both,) his father was rector. Here it was therefore that he probably passed many of his early years. The Arun is here an inconsiderable stream, winding in a channel deeply worn, among meadow, heath and wood.

SONNET XXVII.

(aa) 'Content, and careless of to-morrow's fare.'

Thomson.

SONNET XXVIII.

(bb) 'Balmy hand to bind.'

Collins.

SONNET XXX.

(cc) Clematis flaunts.

Clematis. The plant Bind-with, or Virgin's bower, which towards the end of June begins to cover the hedges and sides of rocky hollows with its beautiful foliage, and flowers of a yellowish white and of an agreeable fragrance; which are succeeded by seed pods, that bear some resemblance to feathers or hair, whence it is sometimes called Old Man's Beard.

(dd) Banks! which inspir'd thy Otway's plaintive strain!
Wilds! whose lorn echo's learn'd the deeper tone
Of Collins' powerful shell!

Collins.

Collins, as well as Otway, was a native of this country; and I should imagine at some period of his life an inhabitant of this neighbourhood, since in his beautiful Ode on the death of Colonel Ross, he says:

The Muse shall still, with social aid,
Her gentlest promise keep,
E'en humble Harting's cottag'd vale
Shall learn the sad repeated tale,
And bid her shepherds weep.

And in the Ode to Pity:

Wild Arun too has heard thy strains,
And Echo, midst my native plains,
Bees cooth'd with Pity's lute.

SONNET XXXI.

(cc) Alpine flowers.

An infinite variety of plants are found on these hills, particularly about this spot: many sorts of Orchis and Cistus of singular beauty, with several others with which I am but imperfectly acquainted.

SONNET XXXIII.

(ff) Thy native

Otway, Collins, Hayley,

Charles Hayley

